



Testimony by Louise H. Feroe
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Before the
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
March 15, 2011

Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. For the record, my name is Louise Feroe and I am Acting Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System. I would like to comment briefly and share my views regarding House Bill 6390, *An Act Concerning Access to Postsecondary Education*.

As the Committee is aware, in Connecticut's high schools there are currently highly motivated, highly capable and incredibly talented individuals who, generally through no fault of their own, lack legal status in this country. Quite often, these young people have been attending our public schools for many years, having been brought here as youngsters, or as infants. They have advanced through our local schools and been a part of our communities. And quite often, these young people have already contributed to the quality of life and economic vitality of our state.

Understandably, a college education is a goal for these young people, as it is for their classmates. It is a goal that is financially challenging and at the same time academically attainable for many, but because current state law does not clearly permit them to qualify for in-state tuition, such an option can fall beyond their reach.

I understand that there are many factors to consider in evaluating the potential benefits of such a policy, but I believe the plusses outweigh the minusses. I also recognize that there are fundamental legal issues that must be carefully considered. From my perspective, however, I see students who can excel in higher education, and whose talents and expertise can greatly benefit the State of Connecticut for years to come.

In my view, students who have completed four years of high school in Connecticut, and have graduated from a high school here, should be provided an opportunity to access higher education at in-state tuition levels. Because we all understand that the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition for these young people is often the difference between going to college or not, such a policy is the right thing to do.

Simply put, it is my view that these Connecticut high school students should be permitted to qualify for in-state tuition, and thereby share with their classmates – many of whom they've attended school with since grade school – the realistic opportunity to pursue their education, earn a degree, and contribute to their state.

Thank you very much.